

Norwegian University  
of Life Sciences



# Pre-Arrival Guide

FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/2023

**Student Information Centre (SiT)**

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## Welcome as an NMBU Student

Congratulations on being admitted to the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU)! We are proud that you have chosen to study with us. This guide will help you prepare for your move to Ås.

You are coming to Norway's most international campus with approximately 18 % of the student body having non-Norwegian citizenship. The international student population can be divided into two groups: degree and exchange students.

### **Degree Students**

NMBU offers one bachelor's degree and sixteen master's degrees taught in English. Each August, we welcome approximately 120 full degree students on campus who plan to spend two or three



years at our university. It is not possible to start a degree program in the spring semester. Degree students come from all over the world.

### **Exchange Students**

The university welcomes exchange students for guest studies for either one or two semesters. Most exchange students come through the Erasmus+ program with the top countries represented being the Netherlands, France and Germany. However, exchange students can come from any country where NMBU has a partnership agreement such as Canada, China, Ethiopia, New Zealand, USA and Zambia among numerous other countries.



## **The Student Information Centre (SiT)**

SiT staff are responsible for admission and general study counseling as well as helping you get started with your studies at NMBU. The SiT office is located on the first floor of the Clock Building, pictured below, and can be found on [MazeMap](#), either on the net or application.

## **Study Advisors at the Faculty**

Each academic program has at least one study advisor. The study advisors can assist with specific questions regarding education plans, compulsory and elective courses, prerequisites, and much more. [Find out how to contact a study advisor.](#)

## **Facebook Group**

Each semester a Facebook group is created for incoming international students. In the autumn semester, members in the closed group are both degree and exchange students. In the spring semester, only exchange students are members.



## **NMBU - Autumn 2022 Incoming International Students**

### *Joining the Group*

You can request to join the group and it normally takes one to three days for access. If your Facebook name is different than your official

name, you can use messenger to send your official name and/or your applicant number, otherwise you will not be granted access.

### Purpose of the Group

The group is for providing and exchanging information both between the university and the students and between fellow students. Everyone is welcome to ask questions of a non-personal nature and introduce themselves.

## Accommodation

There are numerous housing options available. On-campus student housing is not guaranteed, and therefore we recommend applying as early as possible.

### SiÅs Housing (On-Campus)

[The Foundation for Student Life in Ås \(SiÅs\)](#) is a non-profit organization that provides all student welfare services on campus including housing. NMBU and SiÅs work closely together but operate independently.

### Available Unit Types

A) Single room with shared bathroom, shared kitchen

B) Single room with private bathroom, shared kitchen

C) Studio apartment with private bathroom and kitchen



D)

Couples

flat with private bathroom and kitchen

E) Family flat with private bathroom and kitchen



The most common unit type is A and international students will likely be assigned one of these. The other unit types are not

always available as returning students are prioritized.

## **Equipment**

Some units are only partially furnished (without a bed) and this information is included in the unit description. Otherwise single rooms are furnished with a bed, desk and chair as indicated in the unit description. A pillow, duvet and bedsheets can be purchased from SiÅs Housing. Kitchen equipment can either be rented or purchased from SiÅs Housing.

SiÅs Housing units are primarily located in Pentagon (the student village), houses or apartment buildings around campus as well as in the center of Ås. There are often social events at Pentagon making it a convenient and fun place to live.

## **Housing Contracts**

One-year contracts run from 1 July to 30 June. Semester-contracts run from 1 July to 31 December or 1 January to 30 June.

[Apply for SiÅs Accommodation](#) or send an email to [utleie@sias.no](mailto:utleie@sias.no) to ask for instructions on how to start the application process.





## Student Organizations

One of the main reasons for the great student environment at Ås is the diversity of social clubs and student associations. [Studentsamfunnet in Ås](#) is run by and for students and is the cornerstone for much of the social happenings that take place in Ås. SiÅs Housing units are all located a



## Off-Campus/Private Accommodation

Ås is a small university town where it is possible to find many great private housing options, both shared and individual. Public transportation is generally very good, however there are a few areas in Ås where there is limited bus access. If you live off-campus, you should also research your commuting options, including the cost of 30-day tickets, ie monthly pass.

There are several websites which can be used in your search:

- [Private Accommodation on SiÅs Website](#)  
Local landlords who prefer to rent to students often use only this website to market single rooms, apartments or houses in the Ås area.

- [Finn](#)  
This website is only in Norwegian, but “Google translate” can work to some extent. You can always email to request additional information from the landlord.
- [Kjøp/salg/bytte ved NMBU](#) (Facebook Group)  
The group name translates to Buy/Sell/Exchange at NMBU. Locals use this group also to advertise available rooms or alternatively individuals can advertise that they are looking for a room. Although most posts are in Norwegian, it is possible to post in English.
- [RUTER](#)  
You can research your commute time, bus and train routes on this website.





## Moving to Norway: Immigration Procedures

When moving to Norway for studies, international students should be aware of the immigration requirements. These requirements will vary depending on country of citizenship and length of stay.

### Travel Restrictions

Due to the COVID-19 situation, rules may suddenly change, and travel restrictions imposed. Stay updated with the [Norwegian Directorate of Immigration's \(UDI's\)](#) and [Norwegian Institute of Public Health](#) webpages.

### Students from Nordic Countries

Citizens of Denmark, Finland, Iceland or Sweden can live in Norway for up to six months without reporting the move. Nordic citizens planning to live in Norway for more than six months should report the move to the [Norwegian Tax Administration](#) within 8 days of arrival to Norway. It is unnecessary to do anything prior to arrival.



## **Students from EU/EEA Countries**

Citizens of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Spain and the United Kingdom planning to study in Norway more than 3 months must register in Norway. The registration is free of charge.

It is a two-step process:

**Step 1)** Register on the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration's (UDI's) [Application Portal](#) and book an appointment for after your arrival in Norway at the local police station. The local police stations are Ski (called Follo Police), Romerike (Lillestrøm), Østfold (Sarpsborg) and Indre Østfold (Askim) politistasjon.

**Step 2)** Attend the booked police appointment after your arrival in Norway and bring these documents;

- a valid identity card or passport
- NMBU admission letter
- private health insurance or European health insurance card
- handwritten or typed personal declaration stating that you have enough money to support yourself while studying in Norway. The declaration must be signed.



Once you attend the police appointment, a registration certificate will be issued.

## **Students from Non-European Countries**

Citizens from all other countries must apply for either a study permit for stays over three months or in some cases a tourist visa for stays under three months depending on country of citizenship.

### **Study Permit – studies over three months**

Students should review the UDI requirements as soon as possible after admission is granted. An electronic application form can be completed, and it might be possible to book an appointment time on the application portal. Permit processing fee is currently NOK 5,900.



In some countries, application documents must be submitted to VFS Joint Visa Application Centre which will require additional processing fees with a separate appointment booking system.

You will likely need these documents from Norway;

- NMBU admission letter
- Housing Contract: SiÅs or private housing contract
- Documentation of Financing: [funds transfer to university account](#), employment contract or scholarship award from home government. An exception is made for bilateral exchange students as financing is confirmed in the admission letter – see point 1 in the letter.



### Entry Permit

The processing time for the study permit application can vary from 6-12 weeks. If the study permit is granted, an entry permit will be issued by the embassy, consulate or the VFS Centre if required. Entry permits are not required for citizens who do not need a visa to enter Norway.

### Risk Groups

Both bachelor's and master's students from certain countries can be at a higher risk for rejection of the study permit. Nevertheless, each applicant is evaluated on their own merit, but you should be aware of the risks before proceeding. If during the application process, the message below appears for your country of citizenship, you might be at a higher risk for rejection.

Please note! Because of the circumstances in your home country, it may be difficult for applicants from your country to get a residence permit for studying at a lower level than Master level. We will always consider whether there is something specific with your situation that means that you can get a residence permit even though you are studying at a lower level.

Source: [www.udi.no](http://www.udi.no)

### Visitor's Visa – studies under three months

For short study periods under three months, it is possible to apply for a tourist visa. The admission letter can be used for the visa application and the visa is normally issued for only the length of stay indicated in the admission letter. It is important to note that [citizens from countries who do not need a visa to enter Norway](#) can study in Norway up to three months without additional applications.

The processing time for visa applications is 2-4 weeks. The application process is different than the study permit application requiring other documents which are clearly outlined on the UDI pages.

## Packing Tips

### Necessary items

- Personal Computer as required by university regulations
- Valid passport
- Copies of passport
- Tickets/travel documents
- Cash, preferably in Norwegian currency (NOK)
- Bank Card/Credit Card
- List of emergency contacts at home
- UDI Decision Letter (if applicable)
- Letter of Admission
- Prescription Medications - medicines prescribed in your home country may not be available in Norway.
- Confirmation of medical diagnosis for chronic illness in English, if applicable.
- Warm clothing - wool underwear and winter coat.
- Rain Gear – waterproof jacket, pants and boots
- Wind Breaker



### Optional items

- Router: if you would like to set up your own wireless network, you can bring a router with you.
- Travel Insurance: this is strongly recommended for the entire period you are living in Norway to cover incidentals.
- Private Health Insurance: it should cover COVID-19.
- Training gear for indoor and outdoor activities as there are many options at the university gym and around Ås.

## Financial Matters

Norway is an expensive country, and it takes a while to get used to the high cost of living. To give you an idea of the living expenses for a student in Norway, we have put together a modest budget for one semester (all numbers are approximate):

### Cost of Living

#### Sample Semester Budget:

- Housing: NOK 24,000
- Food: NOK 12,000
- Books & Supplies: NOK 5,000
- Transportation: NOK 3,000
- Other expenses: NOK 12,000

#### Sample Prices:

- 1 liter milk: NOK 18
- 1 loaf of bread: NOK 30
- 500g spaghetti: NOK 17
- 1 beer (grocery store): NOK 35
- 1 beer (bar/restaurant): NOK 90
- 1 train ticket to Oslo: NOK 59
- 1 movie ticket: NOK 120





## **Part-time Work in Norway**

International students sometimes wish to supplement their finances with part-time work. The university webpages provide basic [career counseling](#) tips to finding part-time work in Norway, but nevertheless it can be challenging finding part-time work due to lack of Norwegian language skills or the COVID-19 situation. We recommend that students have sufficient financing from home as there is no guarantee in securing work.

## **Funds**

It might take some months before you can open your own Norwegian bank account and exchange students often decide not to open an account. Therefore, you should have a plan about how you will access funds for the first few months or during the exchange period. Below are some tips:

- Pre-paid debit card – if you transferred funds to the university account and ordered it, the card will be ready for your arrival at the SiT office.
- Rent – you can pay for housing several months in advance to avoid international transfer fees. Alternatively, if you transfer funds to the university account, you will be given the option to transfer NOK 24 000 towards rent at SiÅs Housing. This may cover up to 6 months' rent but will depend on the unit type.
- Bank Machines – there are three bank machines in Ås, although none on campus, where you can withdraw money. The fees can be high, so make sure you know how much your bank will charge.
- Money Exchange – at the Oslo Airport and some limited locations in Oslo, you can exchange foreign currency to NOK.
- Bank Cards/Credit Cards – it might be possible to pay for purchases, including groceries, with your bank card or credit card from home. The first time in each shop, you should test your card and have cash available just in case the shop does not accept your card. We recommend you check with your bank about fees associated with using your card in this way.

## Travelling to Ås

### Arrival date

Each semester SiT offers an introduction meeting for international students. These meetings assist new arrivals in creating student accounts, course registration as well as basic information about NMBU.

In the Autumn Semester, there is a week-long introduction for both degree and exchange students. Exchange students not taking an August Block course may arrive later. Travel arrangements can be made accordingly.

If you are unable to attend the introduction week, you can stop by the SiT office once you arrive on campus. You will be given a registration packet and materials which will help you get started.

### Academic Calendar

	Dates	
<b>Autumn Semester</b>		
Introduction Week	8 August – 12 August	
August Block	15 August – 2 September	Exams: 5 September
Autumn Parallel	6 September – 8 December	Exams: 9 – 22 December

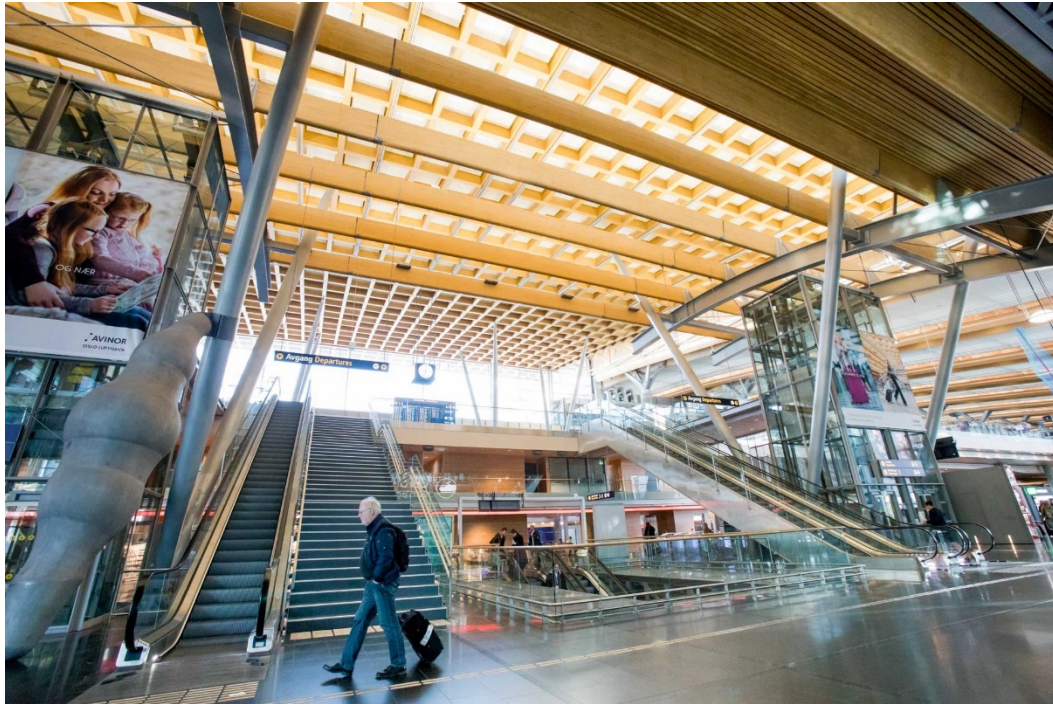
### Hybrid Teaching

Although teaching plans have not been finalized for the next semester, we are aiming for primarily in-site classes and when necessary digital classes. The form of teaching will depend on the situation and applicable regulations and restrictions at that time.

### Airports

The closest airport to Ås is [Oslo Airport](#) (Oslo Lufthavn) with several public transportation options to reach campus. It is also possible to travel to [TORP Sandefjord Airport](#), however there are limited and more expensive public transportation options to reach campus. If you choose to travel to Torp, make sure to research how you will travel to

campus and have an alternative in case of flight delays or you arrive late at night.



## Train

The [Vy Train Group](#) runs frequent trains to Oslo Central Station (Oslo S). At Oslo S, you can transfer to the L21 train travelling towards Moss and stopping in Ås along the way.

The train ticket from Oslo Airport to Ås costs NOK 128, and travel time is about one hour but can vary depending on connections.

Once you arrive in Ås, you can either walk to campus or take a taxi. The SiÅs Housing Office is approximately 1 ½ kilometers from the train station.

The taxi fare from the town center to the SiÅs Housing Office and to your accommodation will cost approximately 150-450 NOK (at night the fare is considerably higher). Taxi phone: +47 06485.



## Bus

[Nettbuss](#) runs buses almost every hour to Ås (Korsegården). Right in front of the airport on platform 44, you can catch the FB11 bus travelling towards Fredrikstad and stopping at Korsegården bus stop.



The bus ticket costs NOK 269 if purchased in advance on the internet or NOK 310 if purchased on the bus. The travel time is one hour. Once you arrive at the Korsegården bus stop, you can take a local bus, walk to campus or ask the bus driver to order a taxi for you. The SiÅs Housing Office is approximately 1 ½ kilometers from the gas station.



You must cross the bridge over the highway to reach the gas station where the taxi will be waiting or where you can start your walk towards campus.

The taxi fare from Korsegården/gas station to the SiÅs Housing Office and to your accommodation will cost approximately 150-450 NOK (at night the fare is considerably higher). Taxi phone: +47 06485.



*The SiÅs Housing Office and Boksmia (university bookshop) are housed in the above building which is located next to the duck pond (not pictured here).*

### **SiÅs Housing Office**

If you will be living on campus, you must arrange to pick-up your keys from the SiÅs Housing Office. The office is located next to the duck pond as shown on [MazeMap](#). Regular office hours are between 10:00 – 15:00 during weekdays. You can email them at [utleie@sias.no](mailto:utleie@sias.no) with your arrival date and time. If you are arriving after hours, they will provide special instructions for how to pick-up your keys.

### **Arriving on a Sunday**

All grocery stores are closed on Sundays except for the [Coop Extra on Raveien](#). On Sundays, only a small part of the store is accessible, but at least basic food items can be purchased. The store's opening hours are 10:00 – 20:00 on Sundays.

# **Welcome to Campus!**

Photo credits: All photos are from the NMBU Photo Archive or Pixabay.